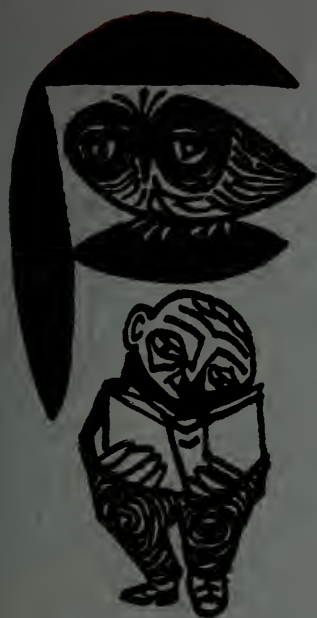


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THE FLYLEAF

Vol. IV, No. 2

Quarterly
February, 1954

EARLY HOUSTON LIBRARIES

What was the earliest library in Houston? One would expect it to be a commercial circulating library, run in connection with a bookselling business. Our colleague Joe Gallegly, in the course of a prolonged search for material in early Texas newspapers, has called to our attention an interesting record of an early library which may well be, as the record itself claims, the earliest library. Mr. Gallegly has kindly given us permission to use this material in the FLYLEAF.

In the Morning Star, Houston, June 18, 1839, is the following advertisement:

Houston Circulating Library, Book, Stationery, and Fancy Store.

No. 7 Long Row, Main St., 3 doors from Preston.
About 1300 volumes of literary works in stock.
Subscription terms: \$20 per year; \$12 for 6 mos.;
\$8 for 3 mos.
Invite examination.
Also have for sale Stationery, School books and
Literary works.

Henry F. Byrne and Company

And in the same issue of the Morning Star is the following announcement plus comment, a respectable advertisement in the form of a respectable piece of news:

It may not be generally know that Messrs. Byrne and Company have established a Circulating Library in this city, which contains a large and well-selected assortment of miscellaneous works. Such an establishment has been long needed in this city, and we doubt not it will be liberally patronized. It is the intention of the proprietors to furnish their patrons with the newest publications, in the shortest possible time after their appearance in the United States, and which undertaking their connections in that country render entirely practicable.

The implication is that this project of Byrne and Company is the "first."

On June 24, 1839, this "Circulating Library" advertises as "Just received and for Sale";

Louisiana Reports by Martin. 20 vols. 8 v in calf
 Kent's Commentaries on American Law 4 vols.
 Civil Code of Louisiana 1 vol.
 La. Code of Practice
 History of the United States by Bancroft, Boston ed.
 M'Culloch's Dict. of Commerce and Commercial
 Navigation, London ed.
 Prescott's History of Ferdinand and Isabella
 Shakespeare, complete in 6 vols.
 Galignani's Paris edition of the works of Lord Byron

Law, history, and literature, it will be seen, with commerce substantially represented by John Ramsay McCulloch's standard work, first edition, 1832-39, second edition, 1834-40.

By May 27, 1840, L. B. Hanchett is the proprietor of a bookstore and library in Long Row (the same one?), and publishes the following appeal in the Morning Star. (Titles of works are given first as in the advertisement, and details are then added in parentheses for the sake of identification.)

To the Forgetful

The following volumes have been loaned from my store, and not returned.

Cutzlaff's China Vol. I (Gustzlaff, C.F.A., The Journal of Two Voyages Along the Coast of China. N. Y., 1833)
 Chalmers' Works Vol. II (Chalmers, Thomas, D.D., Works. Glasgow, 1836, etc.)
 Romance of History Vol. II (Seymer, J.G., The Romance of Ancient History. L., 1834-35)
 The Student Vol. II (Bulwer-Lytton. 1835)
 Calavar, the Romance of Mexico Vol. II (Bird, Robert Montgomery, 1834)
 The Brothers Vol. I (Herbert, Henry William. (N.Y., 1835)
 Devereux Vol. II (Bulwer-Lytton, 1829)
 The Disowned Vol. I (Bulwer-Lytton. 1829)
 Novelette Vol. I (possibly Mott, Henry J., Novellettes of a Traveller, N.Y., 1834)
 The Pilgrims of Walsingham Vol. I (Strickland, Agnes. L., 1835)
 Thatcher's Lives of Indians Vol. I (Thatcher, Benjamin Burney, Indian Biography. N.Y., 1837)

History of China Vol. II (?)
 Eminent Painters Vols. I, II, III (some translation
 of Vasari)
 Diary of a Late Physician Vol. II (Warren, Samuel.
 Edinburgh, 1832-38)
 Plays of Ford Vol. I (Ford, John, ed by Gifford,
 1827, and also in Family Library, 1831)
 Burns' Works Vol. I (too many editions to identify)
 Cox's Female Biography Vol. I (Cox, Francis A.,
 Female Scripture Biography. N.Y., 1817, and
 later eds.)

It is hoped that the individuals who have the
 volumes will either return them or call and take
 the remainder of the sets, as they are in their
 present state of no use to anyone.

The plaintive note about unreturned volumes and broken
 sets may still be heard occasionally in library
 circles. This short list is almost a random
 sampling, of course, but one may infer a substantial
 backbone of standard works, and pretty extensive
 representation of the run of the mine fiction of the
 1830's, with Bulwer-Lytton, as might be expected,
 in a prominent position.

PROSPECTUS

Some of the following works are already here,
 ordered in the spirit of well grounded optimism
 so characteristic of the Friends. For those that
 are here we invite inspection and adoption -- for
 all, your friendly consideration.

Americana.-- Columbia Historical Portrait of New York, ed. John Kouwenhoven. New York: Doubleday, 1953. Documentation by lavish illustration. 15.75

Art.-- Max Beerbohm, Rossetti and His Circle. 1922. 10.50 English literary history in superb caricature. Eugene Bouvy, Daumier. 2 vols. Paris, 1933. 16.24 Frederick Arthur Crisp, Memorial Rings, Charles II to William IV. Privately printed, 1908. 11.70 And a group of works on the movies, classify as you will: Maurice Bessey et Lo Duca, Louis Lumiere, Inventeur. Paris, 1948. Material on the invention of moving pictures. Robert Feild, The Art of Walt Disney. 1947. 5.00 Pierre Lepronon, Charles Chaplin. Les Classiques due Cinema. Paris, 1946 1.50

Defoe.-- A special group of rarities. The Shortest Way with the Dissenters. 1703. \$12.60 The famous pamphlet for which Defoe was sentenced to the prison and the pillory.

Secrets of the Invisible World Display'd, or An Universal History of Apparitions. 1729. 14.70 Memoirs of a Cavalier. London, 1720. 21.00 The first edition of this pioneer historical novel. System of Magick. 1727. 28.00

Of Defoe interest:

Account of Some Remarkable Passages in the Life of a Private Gentleman. London, 1711. 23.52 Account of the Progress of the Reformation of Manners. London, 1704. 3.92

Drama.-- Some fine sets and items here.

George Chapman, Bussy D'Ambois. 1641. 18.20
Not a first, but an important edition.

Sir Charles Sedley, The Mulberry Garden.
second ed. 1675 8.82

John Dryden, Comedies, Tragedies, and Operas.
2 vols. London, 1701. 13.30 The first
collected edition. A key edition, in monu-
mental form, at a very reasonable price.

John Dryden, Dramatic Works. 6 vols.
Ed M. Summers. 1931-32. Magnificently printed
by the Nonesuch Press, this edition got severe
reviews, and is, as we say nowadays, "controversial."

John K. Chapman, editor. The Court Theatre,
and Royal Dramatic Record. 1849. 14.70

George Bernard Shaw, Collected Works. 30 vols.
126.75 The Ayot St. Lawrence Edition. Briefly
mentioned before in the FLYLEAF. The nearest
thing as yet to a complete Shaw. An acquisition
of basic value.

Miscellaneous Literature.-- Martin Clifford,
Notes upon Mr. Dryden's Poems in Four Letters.
1687. 9.80

R. H. Barham, Ingoldsby Legends. 3 vols.
1840-67. 39.76 High price due to the fact
that this a first edition of a famous work in a
fine binding.

Dr. John Arbuthnot, Miscellaneous Works.
2 vols. Glasgow, 1751. \$8.82.

Adrien Baillet, Jugemens des savans sur
les principaux ouvrages des auteurs (this title
spelled as on title-page) 8 vols. in 17. 1725. 17.64

The Adventures of Dick Hazard London, 1755 10.32

Memoirs of Mademoiselle de St. Eugene Dublin, 1766
3.50.

Memoirs of the Manstein Family 2 vols. London, 1783 9.80

Jonathan Swift, On Poetry: A Rhapsody An undated and unidentified early printing of an important poem \$1.00

Natural History.-- John Leonard Knapp, Journal of a Naturalist, London, 1829 5.60 Has been called the botanical companion to White's Selborne
Niko Timberger, The Ferring Gull's World. London, 1953. 5.00 "A Study of the Social Behaviour of Birds."

A scrapbook containing a collection of several hundred clippings and photographs, mostly relating to birds \$8.82

W. E. Mullens, Bibliography of British Ornithology. 1917. 6.54

H. K. Swann, Monographs of the Birds of Prey 2 vols. \$98.00

Samuel A. Grimes, An Album of Southern Birds. U. of Texas Press. 1953. 7.50

Travel.-- J. Perkins, A Residence of Eight Years in Persia among the Nestorian Christians. Andover, 1843. 8.82

John M. Duncan, Travels through Part of the United States and Canada in 1818-19 1823 6.47

Vincent Le Blanc, The World Surveyed. London 1660 \$33.60

E. A. Kendall, Travels through the Northern Part of the United States. 3 vols. New York, 1809. 11.25

Vicomte de Pages, Travels Round the World. 2 vols. London, 1791. 15.00

Sir Henry Yule, editor, The Book of Sir Marco Polo. London, 1871. \$9.80

Alan D. McKillop

RECENT GIFTS

Since the last issue of the Flyleaf, the Fondren Library has received from the Captain James Asbury Tait Chapter, United Daughters of 1812: \$10.00 for the purchase of A journal containing an... account of the hardships, sufferings, battles and captivity of those heroic Kentucky volunteers commanded by General Winchester in 1812-1813, by Elias Darnell; from the National Council of Catholic: 1954 subscriptions to five periodicals; from the League of Women Voters of Houston: a subscription to the National Voter.

The B'nai B'rith Hillel at the Rice Institute gave \$20.00 for subscriptions to several periodicals and books. The College Women's Club, Drama Section continues its gifts of volumes of recent plays.

Gifts of books and periodicals came from many friends of the Library including Dan Mendell, Mr. and Mrs. John de Menil, T. J. Foye, Mrs. Augusta Jones, J. H. McEvoy, Mrs. F. L. Scott, Ann Ridgeway, Mrs. W. A. Sherman, and Hugh C. Black.

Mr. A. L. Selig contributed a complete file of the Journal of Paleontology. Mr. and Mrs. Robert J. Cummins provided funds for the Purchase of Readings by 12 famous writers, a recent Columbia record album which includes readings by Somerset Maugham, Sacheverell Osbert, and Edith Sitwell, Aldous Huxley, Truman Capote, Katherine Anne Porter, John Steinbeck, William Saroyan, John Collier and Christopher Isherwood. Edwin L. Bruhl gave a webster wire recorder.

An interesting collection of songs belonging to her grandmother, her mother and herself was presented by Mrs. C. F. J. Charliss. Mrs. Ralph D. Looney gave funds to purchase Webber's Romance of natural history; James W. Phillips purchased Letters to the citizens of the 4th Congressional district both items having been requested in the last Flyleaf.

Alan D. McKillop provided an interesting collection of 18th century publications: among them were History of the belles lettres, London, 1741, by Carlecas; Belisarius, Dublin, 1767, by Marmontel; St. Peter's lodge, London, 1786.

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